



SCHOOL BOARD ACTION REPORT

DATE: November 6, 2020
FROM: Directors Hersey and Rankin, Board Legislative Liaisons

For Introduction: December 2, 2020
For Action: December 16, 2020

1. TITLE

2020-21 Legislative Agenda

2. PURPOSE

The annual Legislative Agenda is the formal statement of the District’s legislative priorities from the School Board to members of the state and federal legislatures. Because it is the District’s official position, the Board must take action to approve the Agenda, per Board Policy No. 1225, Legislative Program & Advocacy.

3. RECOMMENDED MOTION

I move that the School Board adopt the 2020-21 Legislative Agenda, as attached to the Board action report.

4. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- a. **Background:** The Board traditionally adopts a legislative agenda to share the District’s focus and priorities for the upcoming legislative session with the Washington State Legislature. These legislative priorities were developed with consideration to the current budget outlook and the District’s strategic plan. Although the Legislative Agenda is typically focused on a limited number of priorities, the formal Agenda does not limit District input on other topics.

The 2020-21 proposed legislative agenda is focused on the following areas:

- Stable Funding
- Counseling and Social Emotional Supports
- Restorative Justice
- Access to Learning

The purpose of this Legislative Agenda is to ensure that the legislature understands the critical needs of Seattle Public Schools.

- b. **Alternatives:** The alternative is to not approve the Legislative Agenda. This option is not recommended because policy requires the Board to take action and it is very important the District take a stance on the important issues that affect Seattle Public Schools.

- c. **Research:** The Board’s legislative liaisons gathered feedback from their communities and then worked with district staff and the district’s lobbyist to ensure the highest priorities of the District were named.

5. FISCAL IMPACT/REVENUE SOURCE

The fiscal impact of creating the Legislative Agenda is negligible; however, the Legislative Agenda itself has the potential to bring revenue to the District if the Legislature implements the priorities.

The revenue source for this motion is N/A.

Expenditure: One-time Annual Multi-Year N/A

Revenue: One-time Annual Multi-Year N/A

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

With guidance from the District’s Community Engagement tool, this action was determined to merit the following tier of community engagement:

Not applicable

Tier 1: Inform

Tier 2: Consult/Involve

Tier 3: Collaborate

While this item was not formally taken through the community engagement tool, upon discussion with the Board’s legislative liaisons, Tier 2 was identified because engagement has been occurring as board directors consulted with and involved their communities and stakeholders to identify issues to include on this agenda. Additional engagement will occur with districts across the state, as well as other key partners and stakeholders throughout the legislative session.

7. EQUITY ANALYSIS

The legislative agenda is based on priorities in the district’s 2019-2024 Strategic Plan: High-Quality Instruction and Learning Experiences, Predictable and Consistent Operations, and Culturally Responsive Workforce. In particular, the agenda asks the legislature to provide services, supports, and staffing for the whole child to eliminate the opportunity gap and to support programs that focus on reducing disproportionate discipline, increase student supports for students furthest away from educational justice, and reduce discrimination. In addition, specific supports needed for our students furthest from educational justice in relation to COVID-19 impacts to funding and access to learning were also identified.

8. STUDENT BENEFIT

The priorities on the legislative agenda include providing for the academic, social, cultural, emotional, and behavioral needs of students in every school; enabling warm, welcoming, and safe learning environments; funding capital projects; and supporting legislation that helps to support strategies for equitable student outcomes. All of these asks have the potential for significant student benefit.

9. WHY BOARD ACTION IS NECESSARY

- Amount of contract initial value or contract amendment exceeds \$250,000 (Policy No. 6220)
- Amount of grant exceeds \$250,000 in a single fiscal year (Policy No. 6114)
- Adopting, amending, or repealing a Board policy
- Formally accepting the completion of a public works project and closing out the contract
- Legal requirement for the School Board to take action on this matter
- Board Policy No. 1225, Legislative & Program Advocacy, provides the Board shall approve this item
- Other: _____

10. POLICY IMPLICATION

Per Board Policy No. 1225, Legislative & Program Advocacy, the Board is responsible for developing annual federal and state legislative agendas for the District that are consistent with the furtherance of the District's current strategic plan.

11. BOARD COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

This motion was discussed at the November 12, 2020 Executive Committee meeting. The Committee reviewed the motion and moved the item forward with a recommendation for approval by the full Board.

12. TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Upon approval of this motion, the Legislative Agenda will be sent to the Seattle delegation in the Washington State Legislature and other key partners including the Governor's Office, Mayor's Office, and the Seattle Council Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA), as well as being used during the legislative session. Board Directors will also be sharing this information back out to their communities.

13. ATTACHMENTS

- 2020-21 Legislative Agenda (For Approval)



SEATTLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

State and Federal Legislative Agenda 2020-21



SPS has four priorities for this session in alignment with the district's strategic plan:

1. Stable funding
2. Counseling and Social Emotional Supports
3. Restorative Justice
4. Access to Learning

Stable Funding

- Reimburse for unfunded costs and for reopening costs associated with COVID-19, beyond what is reimbursed by federal funds, such as Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for students and staff, food service, transportation, and online learning
- Protect K-12 funding and prevent mid-year budget reductions; any budget reductions deemed necessary must not create or further exacerbate funding inequities between districts and must be tied to an expenditure-mandate that is also eliminated; limit new requirements for school districts and those that are passed must come with funding
- Maintain stable support for enrollment, levy and pupil transportation funding

Counseling and Social Emotional Support

- Invest in counseling and social emotional learning supports for students. As our students return to classrooms many have experienced financial hardship or other emotionally impactful family situations that will require counseling, mental health or trauma informed support. Investments to equitably serve and support these needs will be critical to the health of our students

Restorative Justice

- Invest in restorative justice practices for students, particularly students of color by providing resources to change school culture, repair harm and transform student to student and staff to student relationships caused by the impacts of disproportionate discipline and structural racism

Access to Learning

- Provide equitable access to technology resources including devices and broadband connectivity
- Ensure resources for individualized needs of all students

Long Term Requests

- After the current budget crisis is over, we ask the legislature to continue work on restoring equity in the K-12 education system by addressing these ongoing issues:
 - Special Education Funding
 - Increased funding for nurses



SEATTLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

State and Federal Legislative Agenda 2020-21

Additional Information

Transportation Hold Harmless

Pupil transportation allocations to school districts are based on student counts and prior year spending. Without changes, the current formula will result in uneven and impractical funding levels for school years 2020-21 and 2021-22, due to drastic interruptions in ridership during the pandemic.

Enrollment and Levy Hold Harmless

Due to the pandemic, the district saw unprecedented declines in student enrollment in 2020-21 especially in kindergarten. We ask the legislature to hold our enrollment at the same levels that were used for funding in 2019-20, less three percent. These unexpected enrollment declines also impact levy collections.

Allow the school districts to find stability by not adding new policy or funding

requirements. As the state addresses the coronavirus outbreak and its economic impacts, the Legislature should avoid imposing additional mandates—funded or not—on school districts. The provision of equitable learning experiences for students is incumbent on stable funding and a moratorium on new expectations.